

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A synchronous network, comprising:

nodes transmitting data to one another in a predefined sequence for a predefined duration, a plurality of said nodes outputting a synchronization signal defining a reference time for a synchronization of said nodes, said synchronization signal having a duration which is longer than a maximum signal transit time occurring inside the network, said synchronization signal having at least one of a time profile and a duration that the synchronization signal can be identified as the synchronization signal even if other synchronization signals which are output by different ones of said nodes are overlapping on one another.

Claim 2. (canceled)

Claim 3. (original) The network according to claim 1, wherein the synchronization signal is encoded using one of an NRZ code, a XERXES code, and a Manchester code.

Applic. No. 09/897,279

Response Dated March 10, 2006

Responsive to Office Action of November 10, 2005

Claim 4. (canceled).

Claim 5. (currently amended) ~~The network according to claim~~  
~~1,~~ A synchronous network, comprising:

nodes transmitting data to one another in a predefined  
sequence for a predefined duration, a plurality of said nodes  
outputting a synchronization signal defining a reference time  
for a synchronization of said nodes, said synchronization  
signal having a duration which is longer than a maximum signal  
transit time occurring inside the network, wherein a  
respective node of said nodes ~~which wishes~~ wishing to  
synchronize with one or more others of said nodes initially  
observes for a predetermined time to determine whether another  
one of said nodes is outputting the synchronization signal or  
other data, and, if another one of said nodes is not  
outputting the synchronization signal or other data, said  
respective node outputs the synchronization signal.

Claim 6. (previously presented) The network according to  
claim 5, wherein said respective node wishing to synchronize  
with one or more others of said nodes outputs the  
synchronization signal during a synchronization phase only if  
said respective node has detected that no other one of said  
nodes is outputting the synchronization signal or other data.

Applic. No. 09/897,279

Response Dated March 10, 2006

Responsive to Office Action of November 10, 2005

Claim 7. (original) The network according to claim 5, wherein said respective node wishing to synchronize with one or more others of said nodes outputs further data which identifies said respective node in a time slot assigned to said respective node after outputting the synchronization signal or receiving the synchronization signal from another one of said nodes.

Claim 8. (original) The network according to claim 7, wherein said respective node wishing to synchronize with one or more of said nodes defines a chronological position of time slots assigned to it as a function of the synchronization signal which is output by said respective node or received by said respective node from another one of said nodes.

Claim 9. (original) The network according to claim 1, wherein the synchronization signal is output in a specific time slot of a time slot cycle used.

Claim 10. (original) The network according to claim 9, wherein the specific time slot is a global time slot in which all of said nodes are allowed to output specific signals and specific data.

Applic. No. 09/897,279

Response Dated March 10, 2006

Responsive to Office Action of November 10, 2005

Claim 11. (original) The network according to claim 1,  
wherein all of said nodes output the synchronization signal.

Claim 12. (original) The network according to claim 7,  
wherein said respective node wishing to synchronize with one  
or more others of said nodes defines a chronological position  
of time slots assigned to it as a function of the  
synchronization signal which is output by said respective node  
or received by said respective node from another one of said  
nodes and as a function of received data which others of said  
nodes have output in their assigned time slots, in order to  
identify itself to others of said nodes.

Claim 13. (original) The network according to claim 7,  
wherein said respective node wishing to synchronize with one  
or more others of said nodes defines a chronological position  
of time slots assigned to it as a function of received data  
which others of said nodes have output in their assigned time  
slots, in order to identify itself to others of said nodes.

Claim 14. (currently amended) A synchronous network,  
comprising:

nodes transmitting data to one another in a predefined  
sequence for a predefined duration, a plurality of said nodes

Applic. No. 09/897,279

Response Dated March 10, 2006

Responsive to Office Action of November 10, 2005

outputting a synchronization signal defining a reference time for a synchronization of said nodes, said synchronization signal having at least one of a time profile and a duration that the synchronization signal can be identified as the synchronization signal even if other synchronization signals which are output by different ones of said nodes are overlapping on one another; and

a respective node of said nodes wishing to synchronize with one or more others of said nodes initially observing for a predetermined time to determine whether another one of said nodes is outputting the synchronization signal or other data, and, if another one of said nodes is not outputting the synchronization signal or other data, said respective node outputting the synchronization signal.